

# Answering Pravu.

*Seven corpus artists  
and a philosopher*



# content

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# iaspis

Konstnärnsämndens  
internationella program  
för bild- och formkonstnärer

# Answering Pravu

Dear All

Miro, Tobias, Henrik and Fredrik  
Please have a look at the sketch describing the project we developed in the Turkish restaurant.

David and Christina

- after our meeting with Pravu in Munich - we developed an idea for a mutual exhibition, please have a look and let me know what you think.

The text is only a sketch for a text with different purposes, but if the content is right for you, I will continue working on it.

Also we should discuss the idea further when we meet again all of us, since Christina and David have not been involved yet.

Until we have discussed it further I will also not ask Pravu if he is interested nor will I look for a space to exhibit - so no panic, I just want to hold on to our discussion for further conversations.

Warm greetings from  
Karen

## ANSWERING PRAVU

18/21 objects of corpus

### Participants:

Pravu Mazumdar,  
Magnus Liljedahl,  
David Clarke,  
Fredrik Ingemansson,  
Henrik Brandt,  
Karen Pontoppidan,  
Miro Sazdic,  
Tobias Birgersson,

Can an object be an answer to a verbal question to an extend that a vivid conversation between sentences and objects can take place?

Maybe communication through language is more precise than communication through objects. Or maybe it is the opposite since language depend on speaking a mutual language where as objects only depend on a mutual cultural background? How can we know that the words we use have the same meaning as we intended for an other? By communicating with words we need to rely on cultural agreements of meaning, but these will always be flavored by the personal experiences of the individuals. It is similar to communicating through objects. In this case the language consist of material, form, function, but also these references are depending on cultural agreements as well as personal interpretations. A bowl is a border between an inner and an outer space,

it is created of material matter, just like a sentence is a rhythm of words connected; the bowl is created as the sentence is build: to give meaning. Are the language of objects and the language of words so separate that they cannot communicate?

### Background:

Pravu Mazumdar is a philosopher based in Munich. Pravu has a strong interest for jewellery as a phenomenon and he has written several texts, given lectures and seminars about it. Pravu has visited Ädellab on different occasions giving courses for the students and the teaching staff. From the professional contact not only friendships but also a deep respect for the knowledges of and the exchange with each other has developed.

At Ädellab our focus also include corpus work, which are objects arisen from the silversmithing tradition. This project challenges Pravu to share our interest for corpus.

The faculty of Ädellab consist of 6 artist in the field of craft and Christina who is professor of craft theory. We have already exhibited together as a group, the latest in September 2012 with the exhibition From Mouth to Mouth. The concept of that exhibition was to investigate how or if our art work can communicate with each other - similar to the exchange we have with each other as human beings and professionals.

The aspect of communication formulated through objects is an ongoing subject of interest in our professions as teachers and makers. This is the subject we would like to investigate further through the project ANSWERING PRAVU.

### Concept:

Pravu Mazumdar will asks us a question based in his philosophical expertise, which we will answer, formulated individually with an object out from our expertises as makers. The object send to Pravu will provoke new questions, properly very different for each of us, and so a conversation will start out from a sentence/object exchange.

The exhibition ANSWERING PRAVU will consist of the results from our exchange, which each of us will answer at least three times.

# Corpus

Dear All

Pravu asked me to give him a short introduction to what corpus is. The text is a sketch, but if you like, I would be grateful for your thoughts.

It is not a text to be published or anything like this, it is mainly for him to get basic information about corpus (and to make him curious!).

Please have a look and let me know what is missing or wrong - it is not my expertise, as you know.

Warm greetings from  
Karen

## Corpus

Corpus is the word used in Scandinavia for objects arising from the silver-smithing tradition. In English it would translate to being hollowware + tableware. Corpus - Latin for body - which therefore would translate better to hollowware, but for some silversmiths the word corpus also includes cutlery, therefore tableware. In German it would translate Gefäß + Gerät.

Basically corpus are objects made in metal (mainly silver) such as bowls, teapots, sugar-bowls, candlesticks, vases, etc.

A beggar-bowl can be a corpus object and so can the holly grail (at least in historical paintings).

In recent years contemporary corpus has "freed" itself from the dictate of being silver or metal objects, in an attempt to gain a

bigger artistic freedom in expression. For example one of our students has in her exam work defined corpus to be; an object/tool used by human beings to control organic material. According to this definition corpus could be a plate, a shopping-wagon or a birdcage!

The movements toward a free corpus definition does however make it difficult to describe what corpus is. Similar to contemporary jewellery - which by now have largely freed itself from precious metals as a given starting point, corpus is in process to free itself too. This freeing process is however more difficult than within jewellery, since corpus share so many references with ceramic and glass objects.

Where the word jewellery describes a defined category of objects - all with a similar purpose, corpus work includes tableware, church objects as well as urns and can therefore not be defined as easily through it's purpose.

What makes an object corpus from a traditional point of view is mainly the silver/gold used, therefore corpus would be objects made by silver-smiths.

Another aspect of corpus that is intriguing but also problematic is that corpus never was an object for the everyday or for the common people. Corpus work - at least in the Western culture - were for the kings and churches, later on for the upper-classes, corpus work was connected to ceremonies and status.

Also in this the wish to connect corpus to a broader definition such as tableware is understandable.

The historical conversation-pieces are interesting corpus work; they are table objects mainly with a decorative purpose often placed at the center of the table or in front of the most prominent guest. Conversation pieces often refer to a practical function (holding salt or fruit) but the practical function is of minor importance since the artistic function totally dominates the pieces. The conversation pieces serve the purpose to be "icebreakers" for a conversation as well as marking status.

In 17th century still-life paintings the metaphorical potential of tableware becomes obvious. All elements of the still-life were symbolic, mostly representing religious thoughts through references to the bible. The table settings were moral or vanitas motives and reminders of Christ. Less known but also interesting is that more secular or political motivated still-life also exists, but mainly for the purpose of marking status for the upper classes.

What makes corpus an interesting category of object for artistic expression are the many references to sacral and secular use throughout history.

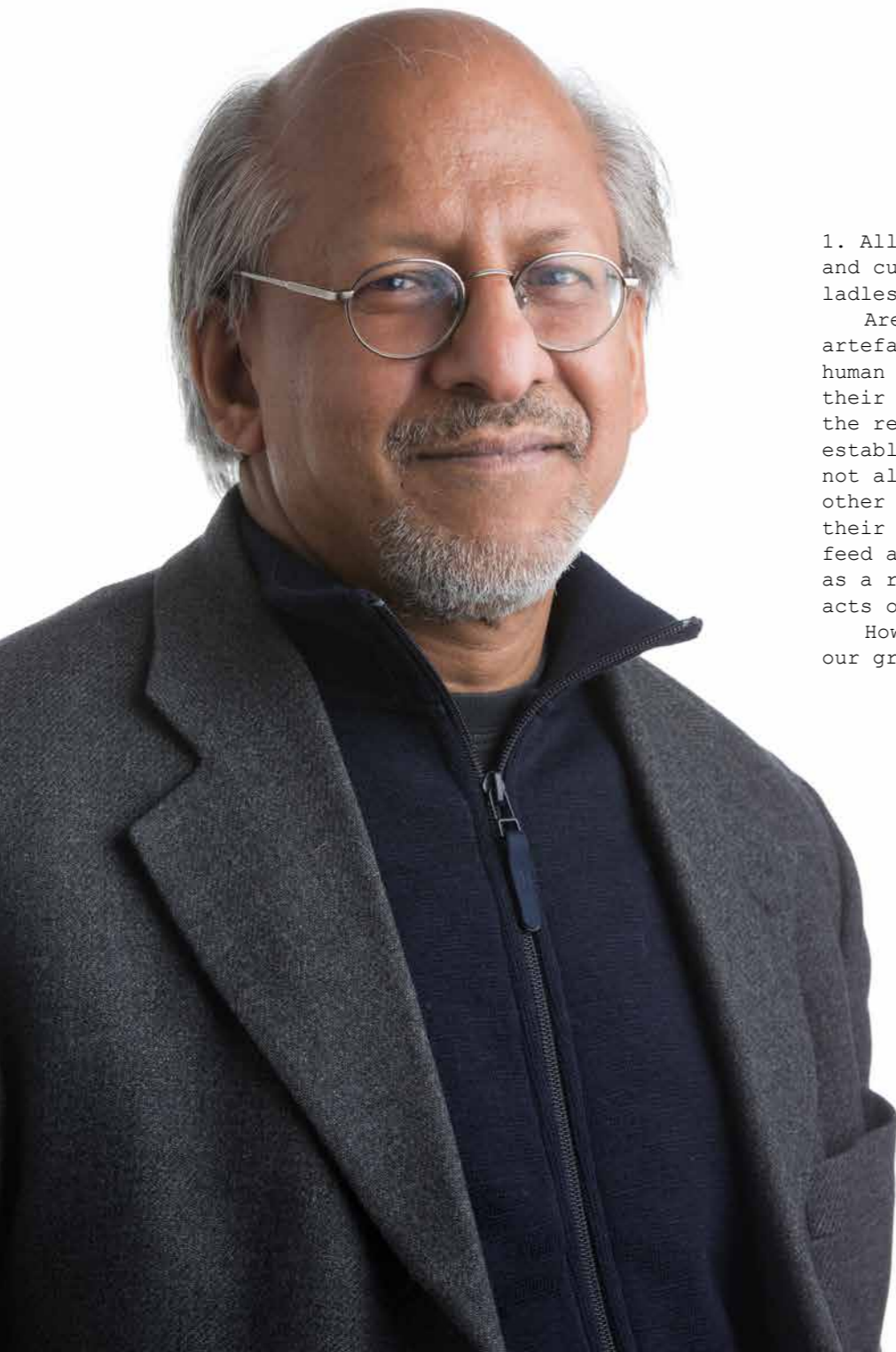
Corpus objects have been and are used in preparing and serving food throughout the world. Corpus objects have been and are used in religious

practices throughout the world. And corpus objects have been and are used in burial ceremonies throughout the world. Which means that corpus are objects participating in human life at essential moments and therefore include a strong cultural reference.

Corpus is for example dealing with eating habits as well as with social interaction within a cultural setting. Eating is a necessity for life but it is also subject for abuse, misuse and social injustice.

Corpus is taking place at the meal; a moment where human beings are experiencing their physical body and their social body at once. This interaction or conflict between a physical need - including all bodily functions - and a social identity - including manners, status etc. - is a powerful aspect of corpus!

# Mood



1. All these pots and pans and spoons and cups and bowls and jugs and ladles!

Are they really nothing more than artefacts emerging from the heat of human productivity? Are we merely their creator and are they merely the result of our traditionally established crafts and skills? Is it not also possible to see them the other way round, that we are no less their creation, considering that they feed and water us daily, that they are as a result inseparable from our daily acts of eating and drinking?

How can we ever begin to formulate our gratitude towards them?

2. No matter what we eat, whether meat, fruits, vegetables: we have to kill prior to eating. But meat - more than vegetables or fruits - reminds us of ourselves and needs to be removed far enough from us, so that we can eat it without inhibition.

The inhibition increases in fact, if we have any relation to whatever we kill, which is probably also the reason why we would usually prefer to eat animals without a name. From the instant something has a name, there is also a relation between us and the bearer of the name. In modern life, it is almost a matter of principle to eat anonymous or anonymised meat or fish, which we perceive or treat as a material, not essentially different from that of the table we are sitting at or the vessels we are eating and drinking out of. Whatever has no name has *less value* than whatever has a name.

3. We eat these anonymous substances as food for our bodies. On the other end of the spectrum a name can allow us to *love* a thing as food for our soul. In other words: we eat and drink whatever has less value than what we love. We can begin to love things like humans, animals, houses, streets, natural objects, when we give them names. And we give them names, when they become important to us. But we do not need to give a proper name to the things we eat.

## Eating and Loving

The opposite of eating is throwing up. The opposite of love is hate. Whatever we hate, we would like to throw up. Whatever we love, we can relate to through our emotional or sexual attention on the one hand, or by incorporating them into our bodies through the act of eating on the other. This explains, why we use the same word in many languages when we say: "I love you!" or "I love fresh fruit!"

4. Whether we eat or love - in both cases, we enter a cycle of exchanges with our environment and unite with the greater reality around and beyond us.

Whether we throw up or hate - we get disconnected from our environment and enter a state of isolation from the greater reality around and beyond ourselves.

All ideologies of moral purity generate distances, hierarchies, devaluation of the Other, revaluation of the Self. In all our practices, which are in any way orgiastic or excessive, we merge, fuse, exchange with our environment.

The individual and non-divisible ego rests on practices of fasting and renouncing, and is enhanced by them. All joy, pleasure and ecstasy result from openness, curiosity and the willingness to surrender and transform ourselves.

"Seven corpus artists and a philosopher joined their hands and heads to produce a discourse, starting out with a set of fundamental questions formulated in words and related to corpus/jewelry; and resulting in a set of answers formulated as objects.

The work displayed was thus the discourse itself, swinging between the opposite poles of words and things. Visitors were invited to participate by extending the circle of discourse with their own words articulated between sips of coffee and pieces of David Clarke's exquisite cake-art."

- Pravu Mazumdar

# Mode

30. May 2013  
Munich

Dear Friends,

Before I begin, I want to thank you for initiating this exciting experiment and inviting me to participate! What you are proposing is an essentially philosophical action and a form of exchange that is rare. First of all: We want to bring words and things together within the mode of a dialogue. That is a truly fascinating vision. Because it implies that words and things have a common base. However, we are not thinking of a dialogue between words and things in general, but between *my words* and the *things you make*, both of which are artefacts. The central question is therefore: can artefacts communicate with each other? I guess yes, for artefacts can always assume the function of gestures. For instance a bottle of champagne can be a gesture of thanks or congratulation. That means that our little experiment might work. I will formulate a question, you will answer with an object, to which I will respond with a new question requiring a new answer with new objects.

My job in the first question will be easy. I simply have to continue using words as I have always done. Your job will be to hew out gestures of response out of the materials you are going to work with. However, from the second question onwards, the adventure also begins for me. I will have to answer your objects by treating them as *questions*, to which I will have to respond with a further question, and so on ...

I originally wanted to let you know something about the thrust of my own philosophical work till this point, as a kind of background and an initial *Kennenlernen*. But I suddenly feel the danger of too much introduction, which might make us lose something like innocence as we proceed. I think it is better to start straight away with the materials, without the persons getting in the way. In a sense I see the complex dialogue we are about to begin, as a mode of practicing friendship. The Greeks understood friendship as a type of philosophical activity and a breeding ground for culture. The Platonic dialogues are nothing other than forms, in which friendship could unfold between human beings united in a common enquiry. I see our question-answer-project in this vein.

A last word on procedure: I think, I will be formulating my questions in the form of "micro-texts": a series of open and rambling texts, which I will try to keep as short as possible. The openness of these texts will be the body of my questions. That way I have the possibility of presenting each question as a fragment of thought, which you can then prolong in any direction you feel driven towards.

Then let's get going!

Pravu

# Questions

**Question 1** *In my view philosophy is not a theory, but a technique or art of producing questions. It is as if the role of philosophy were to let in fresh air and ventilate our thinking. It is as if the space of thought we have been living in till now would suddenly be opened towards an unknown outside, so that we begin to doubt everything we have been thinking till now about the world and ourselves as a part of it. In the special instant, in which a real question surfaces, we are suddenly without a theory about all that is in and around us. We are suddenly confronted with a specific type of emptiness.*

**Q 1. What is then a question? Is it possible to produce a material object, which is not an answer, but a question?**

## COMMENTS ON THE 'ANSWERS' TO QUESTION 1

### Introduction

Basic to any art is an element of reflection, questioning the very existence of the artform as such. That also applies to *corpus*, the four constitutive elements of which are:

- [1] Form
- [2] Possible content
- [3] Material
- [4] Function

[12] In the pragmatic context of everyday life knives, spoons, vessels combine

these four elements, keeping them at the same time separate by "protecting" them from each other. Each element exists in its own terms. It can relate to the other elements like the hollow of a spoon to its function of scooping. But it cannot attack or put into question any other of these elements. For instance the form cannot contradict the function, the material must be such, that it is not eroded by the possible content, etc.

Maybe the object in the specific sense of the *corpus* turns into a question when any one of these four elements is threatened in its very existence.

The fact that two of these works have no title, is certainly connected with the character of the first question, which in its high level of abstraction evokes a basic trait of questions in general: emptiness. If an object is to be a "question", then it has to be emptied of one or more of its elements. Its form becomes opaque, it refuses to yield a meaning, its function is subverted. When an object becomes a question, then it reveals that: no artefact - and in fact no material that can be transformed into artefacts - is ever a mere "thing" or "raw material" divorced from thought, but rather a vehicle for cultural signification. Thus gold or copper, a cup, a saucer are all replete with cultural associations and possess something like an *oblique function* as receptacles of collective memory.

Magnus Liljedahl  
[no title]



The object has no title, the form is clear and stable: a cylinder with two narrowed ends, plugged by stoppers of cork. There is no univocal collective association of a possible function. My personal and rather subjective association is that of a capsule (Warhol's "time capsule"); or that of a jar of sugar candy with a mouth and a base, both of which are identical. The perfect symmetry between the two ends serves to confuse all orientation concerning the distinctions top/bottom, mouth/base. The only (non-utilitarian) function manifests itself when the object lies on its side: as its potential for rolling. The material is also clear: metal and cork. The metal used for the cylindrical body lets the image of a thermos flask with its function of keeping things warm flash through the mind as a chance association. We have here a *corpus* object, whose inner space is sealed up as with the three other objects reflected until now. The object turns into a question by using the form and the material to exclude the inner space.

**Answer 1.1**

[13]

**Answer 1.2** David has produced a strange object with pewter, the material of archaic tableware. It has neither the form of familiar things like dishes or tumblers, nor that of a music instrument. But one could imagine drinking out of it or blowing air through it. In any case it evokes a metaphor swinging to and fro between *corpus* and music. (We know that one can make sounds with pots, pans, dishes, forks, saucers and that the horn can at the same time be drunk out of and blown for producing sound.) The functional soul of vessels is, that whatever comes in - food, drinks,

poison (as with the intrigue ridden snake-holes, which the palaces of old used to be) - must come out: into the mouth and the stomach; or into the gutter, if it is not palatable.

In any case: David's work shows that *corpus* articles, like questions, are transit spaces serving the passage of the elements into human organisms. Aren't all artefacts on the dining table in some sense cultural catalysts for the food-cycle? However, there is an important difference between the function of *corpus* and that of a question, which can be seen as a discursive machine for generating

metamorphoses. A question is on the one hand what answers and evidences can flow into, to get all confused and churned up for a while. On the other hand, it is also what new answers and new evidences can flow out of. Also questions are transit spaces. But their constitution is such, that what comes in *is not* what comes out. This is an essential aspect of questions. In the case of *corpus*, what comes in can come out changed, as in the case of cooking pots or a material, which affects the taste of a drink. But this is not necessary to the definition of *corpus* objects in their entirety.



**David Clarke**  
**[What goes in must**  
**come out]**



# Karen Pontoppidan [Corpus I]

**Answer 1.3** A silver *corpus* - with all the weight associated with silver, but unable to receive a touch without its form breaking down - is another example of a *corpus* object turned into a question. In breaking down, the form projects the material into a foreground presenting itself as an amorphous heap. The *corpus* turns into a heap, as the form "gives way" to the material. Karen's question-object involves the destruction of the form and the function through mere touch. The relation between the hand - and in general the human body - and the object is basic for the functioning of any *corpus*. In Karen's work this relation is applied in such a way, that it destroys both form and possible function at the same time. The content, as with Tobias' spoon, is the material itself. The inner space is expelled or, as it were, extinguished by the material.



## Tobias Birgersson [no title]

**Answer 1.4** Tobias has produced a spoon, which cannot scoop and therefore is no longer a spoon, but rather a spoon turned into a question. For one of its four elements, its function of scooping, is subverted by "prolonging" the form into the content. The common factor between the form and content of Tobias' spoon is the material itself, which is wood. The content is the material itself. The form created from the material of the content. The inner space is more than excluded: it is annihilated permanently.



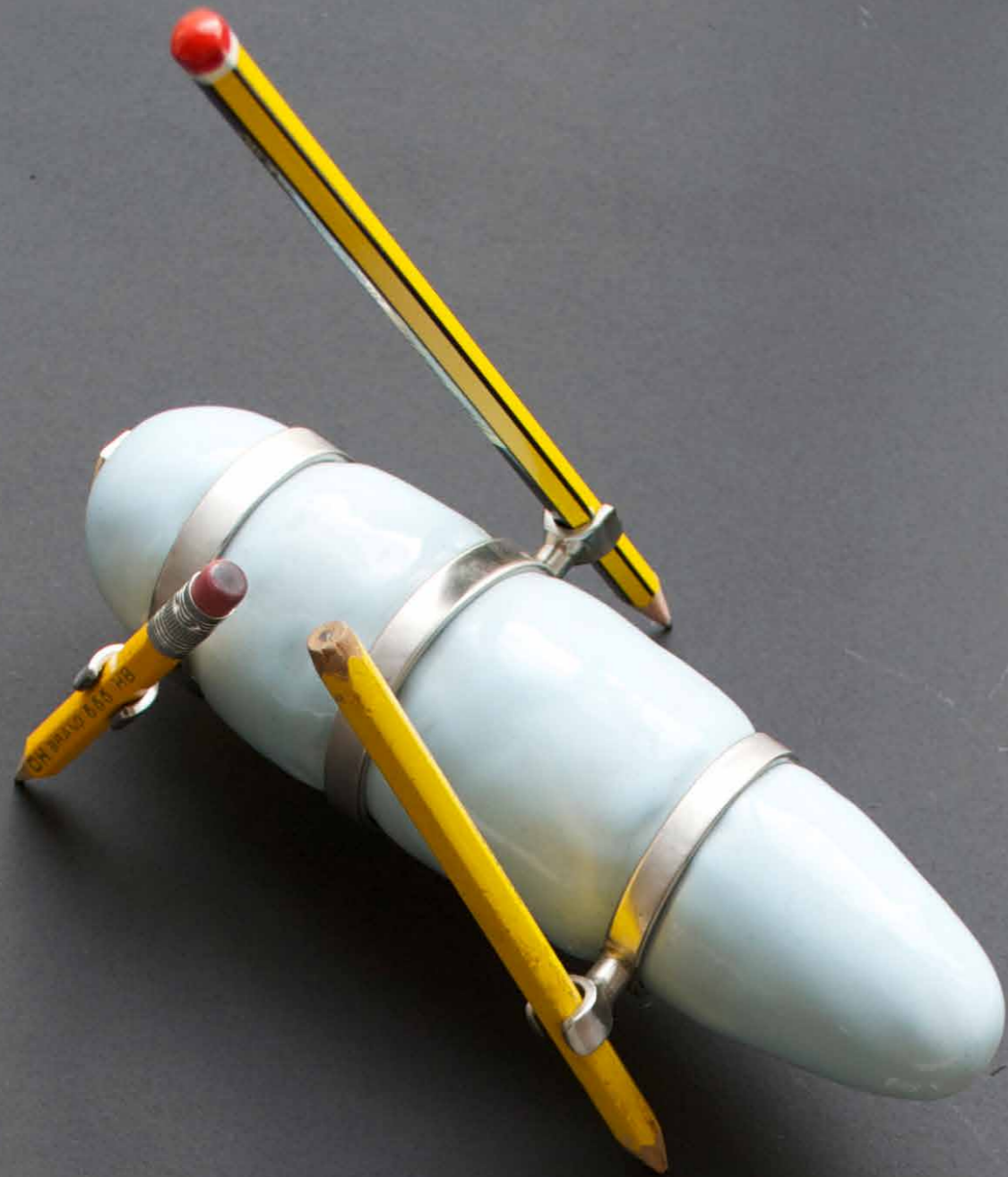
## Fredrik Ingemansson [What's In]

Here, all information concerning the content is reduced mainly to weight and sound. As a secondary information, the inner space makes itself *felt*, when the object is moved by the hand holding it. The content cannot be seen, touched, smelt, tasted, since it is enclosed within that part of the hollow, which has been sealed off and rendered inaccessible. It can rather be heard and felt: as a weight and as something in movement within a space, which is not directly perceptible. As the content is problematized by reducing the information related to it, the function also becomes a

focal point of reflection. What is the function of such a piece? Is it meant to hold, contain, scoop, drink something out of? The piece turns into a question through a systematic reduction of content information and an equally systematic withdrawal of any precisely defined function.

**Answer 1.5**





## Henrik Brandt [Doodle]

The function of a *corpus* is intrinsically associated with a movement. The spoon makes a scooping movement, the cup is raised to the mouth. The bowl is placed and displaced. All these movements are subordinated to a *telos* (aim). The raising of the cup is subordinated to the act of drinking, etc. The function of a *corpus* is a movement subordinated to a *telos*.

Henrik's *corpus* becomes a question by snapping the tie between movement and *telos*. The movement subordinated to a function is reduced to its essence as mere movement, movement *without* a *telos*.

The object is a silicon capsule with three steel rings going around its body, evoking something like the body of a bee or a wasp. The steel rings bring the form of the body, which has no opening whatever, into focus. The inner space is again whisked away, at least to the eye: it has been sealed off by the material.

The strange insect-like body has a tail, which is the cable connecting it to a source of electricity, which starts it into motion. The silicon body is supported by three pencils at three different points, so that its motion creates three distinct tracks, however and in whichever direction it moves. The body is turned into a question by reducing the functional *telos* of movement. The energy moving the body is not the human body using a *corpus*. The energy moving the body is electrical energy, counteracted by the friction between the pencils and the surface on which the motion takes place. The motion itself seems to be erratic, since it is no longer calculable by taking into account a *telos*-like motive like drinking or scooping. The movement of the insect-like body is at most calculable and therefore interpretable by considering all the physical (and not cultural or mental) forces impinging upon it.

Answer 1.6

# Miro Sazdic

## [Let's Have a Coffee]

**Answer 1.7** Miro's work has the openness of a question and the structure of an invitation or proposal, characteristic of all questions, as long they are not rhetoric questions. All questions born out of curiosity or critique are invitations to change: change of perspective, change of attitude, change of approach, etc. All invitations are therefore thresholds to possible exchanges and ensuing changes, taking place in the mode of discourses, disparate signs like pictures, words, texts, symbols, anagrammes, pictogrammes: colliding, harmonising, cooperating with each other and stamping in their semiotic power into the souls being churned through the black hole of a discourse - all over just a cup of coffee!

It begins with a question or a questioning of what materiality actually is. Can there be immaterial materialities? I would add to this a further question: Can the entire sweeping spectrum of all that we term materiality be essentially related to repetition? Is something always repeated - something of the nature of a visual, tactile, chemical, mathematical property - when we are faced with a material? Does a discourse have a materiality of its

own? Does the back and forth, the question and answer, the stimulus and response, so characteristic of discourses have a repetitional materiality of its own? Is the cup of coffee a focal point of the strange, repetitious trajectories of discursive elements like words, statements, exclamations, sudden falterings, the uncomfortable clearing of the throat, getting foam around the mouth, all related to signs leaving their stamps and impressions on the delicate foils of the minds in exchange?

Miro's work is not a question, but an answer to the question "What is a question?". But the answer is packed into the form of rhetoric questions. Her treatment of my *metaquestion* - "What is a question?" - thus provides the answer: A question is the issuing point of a discourse. A cup of coffee is the medium. *Corpus* is in a sense an inevitable pre-requisite of questions. For food and drink are, generally speaking, occasion not only for stuffing things into our bodies, but also for ventilating our minds. All the artefacts gathered on the dining table immediately switch the mind - at least mine - into the mood and mode of discourse.





**Dear everyone!**

Forgive me for the delay in formulating the next question. But I felt that it was important to complete my comments on every work including those of David and Miro. Now everything is at last completed and I am attaching two files. One is a commentary on each of your work. The other is the next question. I would like to add the following remarks:

[1]The commentary is an effort to gather from studying all your works a basic figure of thought concerning "corpus and question". I feel such a commentary is necessary for our exchange to be fruitful. I wonder how you feel about that. Maybe you will find some of the ideas bizarre. But I have simply tried to be honest and have jotted down the impressions which your works made on me.

[2] I also understand the commentary as something like a "support" (or "dramaturgy") for the work of the curator, whenever that begins. It is like a (theoretical) record of our collective work in progress.

[3] I had originally wanted to formulate individual questions for each of you as the next step. However, the process of writing the commentary made me realise that there is indeed a common ground in all your works. (Maybe it is only my philosophical hallucination. But I can't get out of my skin, as you say in German.) Therefore the second question, consisting of two parts, is again meant for all of you. It is my essential response to your works.

Thank you for your patience for waiting and also for the patience, which you will be having to invest in reading the two files!

I for my part will wait impatiently for your next works!!

All the best and looking forward to seeing you all again, maybe next March!

Pravu

# Questions

**Q 2. [a] Is there a threshold to corpus as such? Where does a cup begin, where does it end?**

**Q 2. [b] Are there thresholds within corpus? Where does a cup end and a spoon begin? Is there something like a "corpusness" common to plates, knives, vessels, to name only a few of all that goes to constitute corpus objects?**

## COMMENTS ON THE 'ANSWERS' TO QUESTION 2

### Introduction

Question 1 was not concerned with the four dimensions of a *corpus* object: *form* (hollow/round/large), *intended content* (liquid/dust/solid), *material* (metal/wood/porcelain), *function* (scooping, drinking, piercing). It was instead concerned with creating a *corpus* object as an *instrument* or *medium* for answering a verbally formulated question and elucidating what a *question* as such means: The object turns into a question, when at least one of its dimensions is "suspended".

Question 2 is not concerned with *objects* functioning as answers in the garb of a question, but rather with the *concept* supporting different types of *corpus* objects and identifying (1)

the limits, beyond which it ceases to signify anything like *corpus*, as well as (2) the "fault lines" dividing up the concept according to categories like spoons or bowls or cups with their distinctive features. Such a concept is however radically different from the expression used in the context of what we usually term "concept art". For a *corpus concept* guiding the production of tableware and connected objects is ontologically rooted in life, philosophically speaking, in human *Dasein*, for it is derived from an essential dimension of *being human* and *living the life of a human*. A *corpus concept* is inseparable from activities as elementary as eating, drinking, exchanging, celebrating.

The first part of question 2 is closely connected to question 1. For at the limit, at which the *corpusness* of an object beings to get confused, the object slowly mutates into a question. However, the internal "fault lines" of the concept, constituting a typology of *corpus* objects, question the specific form/content/material/function of a *corpus* type. Is this object a spoon anymore? Or is it already a vessel?

Question 2

[25]

## Tobias Birgersson [no title]

**Answer 2.1** The first thing that strikes the eye here is the double layer of wood and metal. The silver covers up the cracks, which would otherwise be visible on the inner surface of the bowl, perhaps through the translucence of the tea yet to be drunk. Is the inner surface of a tea bowl a threshold to its being a receptacle for a fluid content? Yes and no. Yes, in the formal sense that certain modifications in the topography of the inner surface - like letting it bulge out as a convex surface - would jeopardize the function of a receptacle. A certain format also distinguishes it from a spoon or a

soup dish. No in a material sense. For adding a material like silver to the wood leaves the function of containing tea intact. However, the silver functions like cosmetics. It makes the natural aging of wood, the slow geological transformation of the population and structure of its cracks invisible. Maybe - or in fact quite probably - there will be a perceptible change in the taste of the tea. The impact, says Roland Barthes, which a striptease has, depends on the clothes just discarded. According to the same figure: The taste of the fluid depends on the material it just left behind to affect our tongues and palate.



## David Clarke [Full Fat]

In David's first piece, the emptiness within, traversing the length of the object, evoked associations of the content and function of *corpus* and well as the dynamics of passage. It showed that the function of *corpus* is such, that the content, which comes in, has to come out again, without necessarily undergoing any change. In David's second piece, the

emptiness impinges laterally upon the object and attacks its very being as a receptacle. Instead of a jug, we have the fragment of a jug, incapable of functioning as a receptacle and visible in profile as a contour of broken lines. At the threshold of *corpusness*, the form of the jug is fragmented and its function nullified.

**Answer 2.2**



# Henrik Brandt [Octocorpus]

**Answer 2.3** Henrik continues to explore the association between *corpus* and biological organisms. In general, one can in fact draw an elementary connection between the artefacts we create for the kitchen/table and the animal and plant life that we exploit and kill, in order to transform and consume them in the same spaces of the kitchen/table. Can a cow be taken as a metaphor for a receptacle for milk or meat, is the skin of an orange a kind of prototype of a vessel containing the juice and flesh of the fruit? Does the body of a bee transport honey from the flowers to our mouths, like a spoon or ladle moves our food from vessel to our mouths? In fact, the title of the object - *Octocorpus* - connects the two morphological elements signifying the two poles of the metaphor, the animal and the artefact, initiating a continued exchange of their semantic energies, which underscores the ontological boundary of our understanding of *corpus* as that, which can contain what plants and animals hold in store for us and our biological survival.

Consistent with the title, this hybrid object consists of the shape of a maritime organism made of powder coated steel wire and the lid of a porcelain tea pot. The metaphor not only connects the objects, but also the fluids in concern: the sea water flowing through the body of an octopus and the tea flowing through the drinking human body.



# Fredrik Ingemansson

## [no title]

**Answer 2.4** Fredrik's answer to question 2 is a chalice of copper like his first piece. However, the inner space is one whole without a segment being sealed off, so that the piece can easily be used to drink out of. On the outer surface of the chalice, finger-prints of the potential holder - and drinker - can be seen, made visible with the help of "glass metal". We have seen, that the threshold of a *corpus* object can be explored on the level of its material (by covering wood with silver); or on the level of its being as an artefact and not an organism (as in the hybridity of an "octocorpus"); or on the level of its form and function (as in the case of David's fragmented jug). In this piece, the threshold being explored is that between the worlds of the *corpus* object and that of its human user. The fingerprints designate some of the points of touch,

at which the two worlds get connected, letting the neuronal life of the body flow into the *corpus* and the fluid content of the *corpus* back into the body. In this sense, the fingerprints have the ambivalence typical of all touch: they seem to belong in equal parts to the *corpus* and the human body wielding an arm and a hand to assist the *corpus* in its function of feeding and watering the body.





Magnus Liljedahl  
[no title]



The whole piece looks like a tea set, complete with a candle. The cup-like object has the ambivalence characteristic of all thresholds. It looks like a cup, in fact it has everything that goes to make a cup: the body, the handle, the hollow, the base. But it has something in addition: a concave metal surface that covers the cup and dissolves its function. A normal cup has a rim, which provides a multitude of points, at which the lips may be applied for drinking out of the cup. Here, however, the rim is abolished. What is left is the hole in the middle of the covering surface. But is it possible to place the mouth on the hole and drink out of the vessel? One has to put in a straw through the hole and suck out the tea - as in the case of the plastic cups of the "coffee-to-go" shops. However, the plastic cups can have their lids removed and reveal the rims, from which the content can be drunk. The concave surface in this piece with the hole in the middle compels us to change our mode of drinking. We need an addition to the corpus object to secure the function of drinking. The corpus object is no longer autonomous with respect to its function. It necessitates the external factor of a straw, if the function is to be retrieved. The threshold of *corpusness* is here the threshold at which the function of drinking switches modes: The rim is whisked off - the lips are raised - they close in upon a straw - the vessel is no longer tipped to pour the drink into the mouth, but rather kept straight - the face is no longer raised, but turned downward - the mouth no longer receives the drink passively as it is poured into it - it narrows down to suck in the drink.

Answer 2.5

## Karen Pontoppidan [Corpus II]



**Answer 2.6** Karen's first piece was a formed heap of silver dust. The material merged with the content and transformed the heap shaped by a corpus-like mould, with all its fragility and transience, into a question. In this piece, there is a strict boundary between the material (silver again) and the content. In fact the piece, a rectangular slab of silver, has a semantically minimal form - if we compare it with things as clear and outright as ladles or pots. It could be a multitude of things: a

tiny and exquisite cutting board, a crazy little mirror, a micro-platter for placing tiny fruits or nuts or pieces of salted chocolate for the guests, a piece of sculpture imitating a cigarette case, etc. It is only the piece of soap that gives it a functional meaning. The threshold explored in this object is that between a *corpus* object and its content. It is a threshold, which serves to define the function of the object and determine it in its specific *corpulence*.

## Miro Sazdic [Habibi]

Suddenly the table and all the tableware with their food and drink have been whisked away. Or are we in a state of limbo, waiting for their return? What remains, is a piece of cotton, which can be spread out anywhere: on a table, on the bed, on the floor, on a meadow for a picnic. The embroidery on the piece consists of a linear and geometrical ornamentation, done with the care and intimacy of a "Habibi" ("My beloved" in Arabic), the border with its red strands enhance the impression. Is there a subtle message in the ornamentation or in the way, in which the piece is folded, waiting to be spread out for eating, talking, exchanging? In Miro's first piece, *corpus* revealed itself as an invitation to discourse and as the point of its take-off. In this piece of embroidered cloth embodying the act of waiting for food, drinks and words to be offered and exchanged, the discourse has already begun: as the subtle message of the embroidered lines and rectangular fields and the folds echoing them. The centre of attention of this piece is again not occupied by the form, function, content or material of a *corpus* object, but the social and discursive context of its

use. In the first piece, the cup was an invitation to a discourse. In this piece, the discourse is already there in its embroidery and fold and serves as an invitation to the return of *corpus* and, along with it, to the singular moment of eating, drinking, talking, making merry.

**Answer 2.7**

# Questions

**Question 3** Q 3. Some of you are jewellers. Is there any essential relation between corpus and ornament?

**COMMENTS ON THE 'ANSWERS' TO QUESTION 3**

**Introduction**

## **A. ORNAMENT AND SURFACE**

The term "ornament" is used in contexts as different as architecture, jewellery, rhetoric. Traditionally it is seen as a *supplementary* element, which is not essential, but instead something like a decorative addition or embellishment without relevance to a "real" function, contrary to a roof, a dress, a technical concept.

One of the meanings of the Latin verb *ornare* is "to equip", implying the addition of something like a tool, a weapon, a fitting in the face of a danger, a threat or a problem of any kind. An ornament usually finds its place as a layer superimposed on an empty wall, the empty surface of an artefact, the plain and inconspicuous style of a sentence, so devoid of figuration that it would otherwise be hardly perceivable or retained in memory. In this sense, the ornament "attacks" and annihilates the emptiness of a surface, which is exactly what an answer does to the emptiness of a question. But

ornamentation also involves *marking* a surface and making it 'visible'. Without ornamentation, the surface would remain 'less' perceptible in its originally unornamented emptiness.

In a sense therefore ornamentation can be seen as a means of *masking* the *emptiness* of a surface, notwithstanding its different roles in corpus and jewellery.

## **B. A SHORT HISTORY OF ORNAMENTATION**

1. Traditional ornamentation is inseparable from premodern regimes of signification. On the one hand, the signifier is expected to signify an entity that is *transcendent* with respect to its formal and material basis. On the other hand, typically for *symbolic* cultures, the signifier is seen as permeated with the transcendent nature of the signified. This is why gold, traditionally a symbol of the sun, has been regarded - across a wide variety of cultures from Asia across Medieval and Renaissance Europe to the Eldorado cult in ancient Columbia - as a sacred material imbued with the cosmic power and transcendence of the sun. In a similar vein, heraldic emblems utilise forms and materials to signify and symbolise the nobility of descent.

2. A classic illustration of the premodern function of ornamentation is provided by the 18th song of the Homeric *Iliad*, in which the

ornamentation on the shield of Achilles, crafted by the divine smith Hephaistos, is described as a narrative flow, in which the site of the shield, the battlefield, is portrayed as a besieged city on the surface of the earth, which in turn is sheathed in a series of spheres, consisting of the oceanic belt *Okeanos*, the sky, the Pleiades and Orion.

Beyond signifying the function of the shield, the ornamentation reveals its cosmic emplacement and invokes the outcome and destiny of the Trojan war, quite in tune with the symbolic connection typical of premodern ornamentation, in which a signifier participates in the transcendence of the signified entity.

3. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was a powerful discourse, proposing that ornamentation - understood as an excess with respect to function - was incompatible with modernity. For architects like Louis Sullivan, Adolph Loos, Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the very idea of a *modern* ornamentation seemed to be an oxymoron. Such typically modern contempt of ornamentation derives not only from the decline of the traditional crafts in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, as some scholars would have it<sup>1</sup>, but also from the fact that all ornamentation is rooted in the semiotic regime contemporary to it.

Modern ornamentation is no different and can be expected to be rooted in the semiotic regime pertaining to modern discourses, which Jean Baudrillard has characterized as the dispositive of the free-floating sign<sup>2</sup>. This can be taken as a mode of signification, in which the categorical distinction between the planes of the

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<sup>1</sup> See Michael Müller, *Die Verdrängung des Ornaments. Zum Verhältnis von Architektur und Lebenspraxis*, ed. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977, chapter I.

<sup>2</sup> Baudrillard, Jean, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, New York: Sage Publications, 1993.

signifier and the signified falls flat, implying that any signifier, including ornamentation, is entangled in a semiotic process, in which it either signifies another signifier or is caught up in an act of self-signification. The regime of free-floating signification finds itself incarnated in structures of semiotic concatenation: long chains of signifiers signifying other signifiers, which in their turn signify yet others.

In all such cases, the signifier is on the same plane as the signified and therefore of the *same* degree of immateriality. And yet, in order to be able to function as a signifier, it has to assume a semiotically *different* position with respect to the signified. The regime of free-floating signification is based on the semiotic figure of *difference and repetition*.

4. Thus, like the symbolism of premodern societies, the regime of the free-floating signifier can be characterized as a *repetition* as well as a *difference*. For, just as the symbol participates in the transcendence of the signified, the modern signifier participates in the immaterial and semiotic nature of the signified, which is itself a signifier in an endless chain of signification.

In this sense, free-floating signification *repeats* the premodern symbolism of participatory signification. And yet there is an essential *difference* between the two regimes. For, contrary to all premodern symbolism, the free-floating signifier is incapable of signifying anything *real*. It can only signify another signifier and remains bound to the semiotic sphere, so that reality emerges as a *fiction* through the non-ending process of free-floating signification.

When contemporary ornamentation is not caught up in acts of self-signification, it repeats premodern signification in the mode of fiction. When ornamentation does reappear in the modern context, it can do so as a repetition or 'quotation' of premodern signification, arrayed in a kind of archaeological stratification.

# Tobias Birgersson

## [no title]

**Answer 3.1** The piece at hand is an African bottle gourd (calabash), painted over with car lacquer and provided with a bronze knob that seems to indicate the opening of a vessel, through which water, grain or palm wine might flow. The larger bulb of the gourd is covered with a 24-karat gold leaf, the smaller patched with sterling silver. Like any hollowware, calabash can be used as a vessel for food or drinks, which are products of the earth, or as a resonating body for producing sounds, which are waves of air. Earth and air are their frame of reference.

However, in premodern systems of thought, earth and air are often not only primordial elements, but also the first steps of a cosmic chain that ultimately leads on to the celestial bodies. Whereas the two bulbs of the calabash form a dyad, the bronze knob extends them to a series that is reminiscent of the alignment of planets in the solar system. Thus the calabash, a traditional channel for the flow of musical or material nourishment, becomes a metaphor for

the cosmic order embedding the human body, which is adrift on the pathways of destiny and in permanent need of being nourished.

The ornamental structure of the surface underscores the transformation of the calabash into a metaphor that connects the sublunar realities of earth and air flowing through it with the constellation of celestial bodies evoked by its bulbous form.

In ancient Mesopotamian there used to be catalogues of correspondences between the metals and the heavenly bodies, defining gold as a symbol of the Sun, silver as that of the Moon, copper as symbolising Venus. Here, the calabash has been transformed into

a symbol of the cosmic alignment of the Sun (gold), the Moon (silver) and Venus (copper, which is predominant in bronze) by reworking its surface with gold and silver and attaching the bronze knob. The silver patches on the surface of the smaller bulb seem to interrupt the otherwise immaculate surface of ornamentation to effect something like a Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt* that seems to say: "Look at this! This is not what it seems to be, it is not a symbol, but something that has emerged from the human hand with its futile attempts at transforming clumps of matter into art to make sense of whatever is going on around!"



# Henrik Brandt

## [Comfortably Numb]

**Answer 3.2** One sees here what looks like an approximation of a medieval armour, an aluminium hood without any opening for the eyes or the nose. Attached to its side is a cylindrical glass vessel with two rounded ends, meant to contain red wine and attached to a tube. The other end of the tube is fitted with a nozzle that enters the hood. An armour is a protective cover reminiscent of a fortress or a citadel with few openings, through which projectiles can be fired at an enemy. Medieval armour, however, is inseparably associated with heraldic emblems functioning as semiotic windows to the nature, identity and allegiance of the combatant subjects. Heraldic ornamentation fights the emptiness of an armoured surface by identifying the fighter.

In the piece at hand, the shape, reminiscent of armour, contrasts with the surface that is returned, as it were, to its primeval emptiness. Which is why the opening in the hood, leading the nozzle and wine through the metal surface into the vulnerable

interior of a fortified body, is all the more conspicuous: as a primordial mouth shorn of all individuality, symbolising all the real mouths that might be positioned behind the hood to receive the nozzle that connects the glass vessel with the body of a drinker.

In medieval combat, either the gaze could sink through the heraldic symbols on an armour surface towards the blue-blooded, genealogical depths of a warrior, or a lance could penetrate the metal surface to draw red blood. In the piece at hand, the red wine flows through a gap in the metal surface of the hood in the opposite direction as spilt blood: towards the biological depths of a drinker, whose genealogical identity remains masked by the aluminium hood, in sharp contrast to the medieval helmet and its heraldic emblems.



## Fredrik Ingemansson [no title]

**Answer 3.3** The object at hand is a "hip-flask" made of a copper cylinder hammered into a flattened shape with an oval cross-section and provided with a soldered bottom and top. Through the curved surface of the flask, a tube is riveted, through which a cotton cord is fed as a sling for fixing the flask at the hip. The mouth of the flask is stopped with a plug ending in a hexagonal knob of brass with a flat top. On the surface of the knob, an Austrian Schilling with an Edelweiss motif is fixed, functioning as a metonymic evocation of the Austrian Alps. The flower thus signifies neither the content nor the function of the flask, but instead its location: the mountain top, on which the flask might be emptied to return strength to the tired limbs and to celebrate a victorious climb. As with the Homeric shield, the ornament serves as an act of emplacement, in this case the emplacement of a flask in its alpine context.



## David Clarke [no title]

We see an old silver plated sugar bowl with two handles and coated in royal icing and platinum cake decorations. The ornamentation, sweet to the taste and consisting in little white globules spread out evenly over the silver plating, signifies the content and function of the bowl. True to Baudrillard's regime of the free floating sign, such an ornamentation is based on *difference*.

**Answer 3.4** For it can only signify the content of the bowl as long as there is a difference between itself and the sugar that will eventually find its place within the bowl. At the same time, such an ornamentation is *repetition*. For it not only marks the surface and function of the bowl, but also signifies its potential content by repeating in its own materiality the colour and taste of refined sugar.



# Magnus Liljedahl

## [no title]

**Answer 3.5** We see a tall coffee pot on a circular plinth. It has an angular handle on its right side and a slim and elegant spout on its left, emerging at the base of the pot and swerving up like the neck of a swan to the height of the lid. A metal knob consisting of two discs and a connecting rod is fixed on to the lid. The pot is made entirely of plastic beads normally used by children. It has no hollow inner space for the coffee it is meant to accommodate, but appears instead as an ornament in its material entirety. Ornamentation is no longer restricted to a surface here, in order to effect things like cosmic emplacement, signification of content or function, symbolic reference to a transcendent entity. The ornamental beads constitute the volume and surface of the coffee pot, eradicating any possibility of a hollow space and therefore of content. The ornamental assembly of beads exists in the pure, reflexive mode of self-signification.





## Karen Pontoppidan [Corpus III]

We have here an elegantly curved piece of silver and steel. In one sense, it is reminiscent of a door handle. In another sense, it can be seen as a handle without a door. In the latter sense, the absence of a door robs it of all pragmatic function and transforms it into the non-utilitarian excess that ultimately characterises all ornamentation as well as its modern rival, the readymade. Here, the semiotic function of ornamentation is whisked away, so that the would-be ornament transforms into a *thing*, that needs to be attached *ad lib* to any object like a wall or a door, in order to be able to assume its role either as an ornament or as a pragmatic

fixture of some sort. We are faced with a detachable ornament as a mobile object or readymade that transforms into an ornamental signifier the moment it is supplemented by the thing it is supposed to ornament.

**Answer 3.6**



# Miro Sazdic

## [Director]

### Answer 3.7

All symbols, all ornamentation take up their position on a surface to draw our attention, give it a direction and transport it towards the invisible interiority of an object. The Greek understood the human condition as a state of being enveloped by three shells: the shell of the body (*soma*), the shell of the house (*oikos*) and the shell of the world at large (*kósmos*). At the centre of such a system of shells is the living soul (*psyché*). Each of these shells is associated with a specific type of ornamentation that renders it visible and directs our attention towards the living soul inhabiting it.

The outermost shell of the *kósmos* is ornamented by the luminous constellations of heavenly bodies that affect us so deeply in the darkness of night and reveal us not only our emplacement in the cosmic whole, but also makes us aware of our own microcosmic interiority.

The middle shell of the *oikos* has its own architectural ornamentation, which connects the space of a household with the daily life inhabiting it. And, finally, the body, the *soma*, finds itself draped in dress and jewellery, giving expression to the personality that inhabits the body.

The Greek term "*kósmos*" has in fact several meanings that span all the three shells and include all three levels of ornamentation. The term means on the one hand the entirety around us, which we perceive as the world. On the other hand, it can mean order and ornamentation and, ultimately, jewellery. The world and

ornamentation are designated by one and the same term.

However, a surface is never really empty, even before it is ornamented. For it reveals the visible properties of a material: the sheen of gold and silver, the white of paper, the grain of wood and marble, etc. The visible surface of a material is the starting point of all ornamentation. The latter augments or contradicts the inherent visual tendencies of a material, in order to direct our attention to the immaterial soul of an object.

If all ornamentation can be regarded as dotted interruptions on the "skin" of a material object, marking the points, at which the surface seems to cave in and draw our attention into the invisible interiority of the object, then Miro Sazdic's *Director* pieces can be seen as *models* corresponding to a functional theory of ornamentation. Instead of *presenting* a particular type of ornamentation in tune with a certain regime of signification, these pieces seem to *represent* the function of (pre-modern) ornamentation itself - consisting in the act of channelling our minds -, as they draw our attention through the open mouths of the paper beakers to reveal neither the meat of an essence nor the bone of a structure, but rather *empty spaces* leaving us the freedom to move our minds in whichever direction we choose. Ornamentation lets the surface cave in and point towards the inherent nothingness of things and the possibilities of a fiction of their "inner truth".



# Answering Pravu Exhibition Munich 2015

Dear David, Fredrik, Henrik, Magnus, Miro,  
Pravu and Tobias

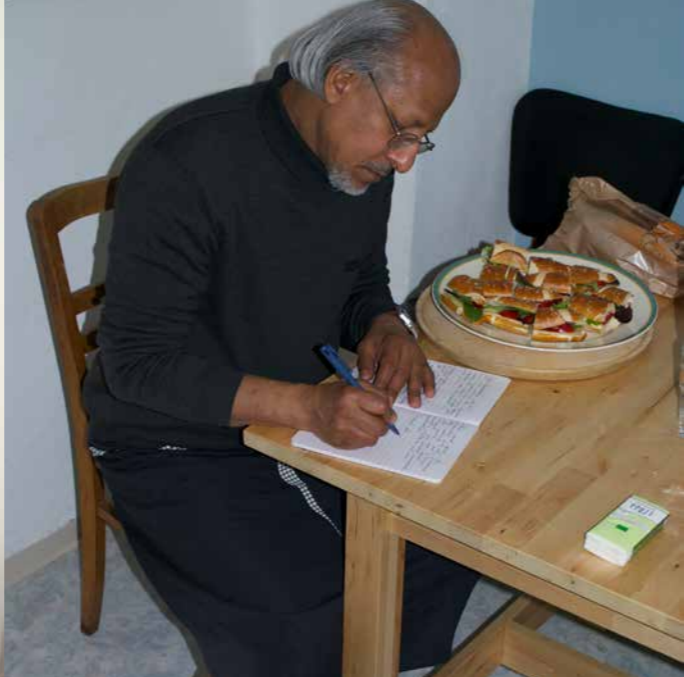
Here are the collected ideas for our ANSWERING PRAVU  
exhibition:

- ▶ The exhibition shall take place during the Schmuck-  
fair in Munich in order to engage a large audience
- ▶ The presentation is not a usual exhibition of  
objects but an "open space" - an interactive and  
communicative event in order to share not only our  
results but also the discourse with the audience
- ▶ For this purpose we will create a "café" and  
invite the visitors to stay for a while
- ▶ We will offer coffee/tee/water and cakes (David is  
baking!) free of charge
- ▶ All of us will be serving together and we will all  
be engaging in conversations with the visitors
- ▶ We will be wearing similar black aprons to make it  
easier for the visitors to identify us
- ▶ Our object will be presented in the space, and  
Pravu's questions + reflexions will be printed and  
place on the tables for people to read, if they  
like

I think we all agree that the exhibition should not  
be focusing only on results; instead it should be  
inviting people into our conversations.

Warm greetings from  
Karen







225g Unsalted Butter  
 225g Caster Sugar  
 4 Large Eggs  
 50g Plain Flour  
 225g Ground Almonds  
 1/2 teaspoon Almond essence  
 Zest & Juice 2 Lemons

Gas mark 4/180C

- ▶ Mix butter and sugar until white
- ▶ Beat in eggs, 1 at a time adding flour as you go
- ▶ Stir in gently: almonds, essence and lemon zest and juice
- ▶ Bake about 1 hour, check as you want it damp

HAPPY BAKING!



# Damp Lemon Cake



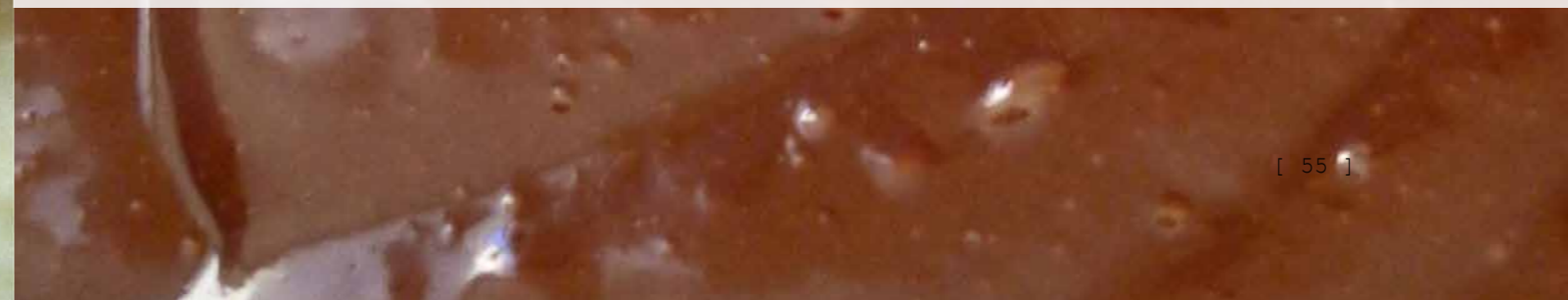
# Twice Baked Chocolate Cake

240g unsalted butter  
 265g dark chocolate (52% cocoa)  
 95g dark chocolate (70% cocoa)  
 290g muscovado sugar  
 4 tbspoon water  
 5 large eggs, separated  
 pinch of salt  
 cocoa powder for dusting

- ▶ Preheat your oven to Gas mark 3 or 170°C
- ▶ In a large bowl combine the chopped chocolates and butter.
- ▶ Combine the muscovado sugar and water in a sauce pan and bring to a boil stirring frequently
- ▶ Pour the boiling syrup over the chocolate and butter and stir until they have melted
- ▶ Add the egg yolks, one at a time, let the mixture come to room temperature

- ▶ In a large bowl, beat egg whites and salt to a firm meringue
- ▶ Using a spatula, fold in the meringue into the chocolate mixture
- ▶ Pour 2/3rds of the batter into your cake tin and bake for 40 minutes
- ▶ Remove the cake from the oven and leave it on a wire rack to cool completely
- ▶ Flatten the cake with a spatula
- ▶ Pour in the rest of the batter
- ▶ Return the cake to the oven and bake for a further 20-25 minutes
- ▶ Allow to cool completely
- ▶ Dust with cocoa powder

Eat at speed as it will be gone in a flash!



# Answering Pravu at Zimmerhof

## Abstract

The technique of presentation was a kind of structured spontaneity unfolding as a discourse between Miro, Pravu and the audience, in keeping with the style of cooperation followed by our group till then.

### 1.

Pravu? What's that? A person, a question? A person and a question? A person as a trajectory to a question?

Maybe it is best to define Pravu as a gadget for generating questions for a team of craftspeople, each functioning as a trajectory to a product like a heap of silver dust, a sugar-coated sugar bowl, a coffeepot made of colourful beads, a lonely handle on the search for its door, an embroidered piece of cotton transforming into a table wherever it is spread out ... all in response to questions cut out to stimulate the production of objects as answers crafted in matter ...

### 2.

It all started with a workshop in 2012, in which a group of seven craftspeople and staff at Ädellab (Konstfack, Stockholm) met a philosopher, talked with each other, became friends and came round to the necessity of working together. The title Answering Pravu addresses the specific mode of amicable communication that generated the conceptual productivity inherent to this project.

### 3.

In all discussions on art there is a tacit acknowledgement that one can respond to the materiality of objects with the immateriality of words. But can such a process be reversed? Is it possible to respond to words through material objects? Can they function as answers to questions sculpted out of words?

### 4.

This was the ignition point of a collective enquiry which evolved into a meandering dialogue between words and things in a period of two years in three stages marked by three different questions. The outcome of the dialogue was the constellation of 21 works exhibited in Answering Pravu. The show took place in March 2015 in Karen Pontoppidan's Munich studio.

### 5.

If artistic practice can be seen as a response to a set of aesthetic and philosophical problems, then the three questions which preceded and provoked the 21 objects of the exhibition could be sensed as the intellectual environment and the emotional soil, in which the works had germinated and thrived.

### 6.

The mode of display resulted from a transformation of the space of the studio into the space of discourse. The questions were written on a blackboard on a wall opposite to a window sill, on which the 21 objects were placed. The space between the questions and their material answers was inhabited by the visitors sitting at little tables, drinking coffee, eating David Clarke's exquisite cakes, reading the comments on the objects, discussing and reflecting on how the comments generated the succeeding questions, adding their own ideas and questions in writing, in short: absorbing and generating the discourse at the same time. The most important aspect of the process was: it was fun!



SCHMUCK  
SYMPOSIUM  
ZIMMERHOF  
2015

Dear Pravu,

Warmest regards from the editors of Current Obsession, interdisciplinary magazine and platform focused around contemporary jewellery. It was lovely meeting you in Munich and visit the 'Answering Pravu' exhibition. As we discussed there, we would love you to come and talk at the Zimmerhof Symposium. Please, have a look at the invitation below and let us know if you have the time and the desire to contribute.

///

Current Obsession has been asked to host and invite speakers for the next annual Jewellery Symposium Zimmerhof in Bad Rappenau, Germany [4th-7th of June 2015]. We're excited because we were given the freedom to explore the discourse and the context of contemporary jewellery by hosting talks by exhibition makers, researchers, trend forecasters, artists and jewellers alike. We came up with the theme 'Future Jewellery Icons', asking people we are eager to, or have already worked with, to discuss current and upcoming directions/signs/paths where jewellery might lead us.

We think that you can contribute hugely to this program with your talk based on your practice and current connection/interest in contemporary jewellery and corpus. We think that in-depth discussion of the 'Answering Pravu' project could serve as an

excellent source for a talk. You can, however, choose the subject you feel more suitable or we can discuss things further upon your agreement to accept the invitation.

Zimmerhof is a very special content-making event: We have fun, stay for longer than anticipated and share knowledge and experience in an informal and cozy setting, surrounded by German countryside, dancing in barns and sitting by bonfires. Curating the 47th edition of Zimmerhof we want to turn up the volume and make it into something memorable and future-forward. As a magazine and event/exhibition platform we are creating content, exploring in-depth notions and try to give a voice to artists and designers. Please, find additional information attached below.

CURATORIAL TEXT:

FUTURE. JEWELLERY. ICONS.

With Future Jewellery Icons, we invite you to dig deep into the meanings and relationships between these three notions.

/ What is the Future of Jewellery? As Contemporary Jewellery builds up the awareness of its identity, we may see growth of successful cross-disciplinary collaborations. By being placed in a wider context of today's visual culture, Contemporary Jewellery can learn new strategies. We are curious about what may begin to happen when jewellery, art, design and fashion truly start to converge.

// What are Jewellery's Icons? Icon is an ambiguous word simultaneously connoting a religious symbol loaded with historical and spiritual content, a flickering symbol on a computer desktop distilled and reduced in meaning, or an actual person - a rock star or a celebrity. Does Contemporary Jewellery have a system of symbols and signs connecting the past and the future? And if so, where do these symbols and signs belong: in a subculture, within the mainstream, or have they lost their cultural relevance?

/// What are the Icons of the Future? We are interested in new attitudes, new types of projects and new personalities to explore this idea: join us to hear talks by exhibition makers, researchers, trend forecasters, artists and jewellers who have explored the challenges and the confines of their own disciplines.

What do you think?

Please, find attached more information about the event and get back to us soon.

all the best,

Marina and Sarah  
Current Obsession

*Dear friends,*

*I am forwarding the invitation from Current Obsession, which came today. I have a request to Miro: Can you send me as soon as possible a short characterization of your office, your work as an artist and whatever else would be relevant for introducing you to the CO-people, when I suggest that you do the presentation? That would be a great help! I will wait till I hear from you before answering them.*

*I think, this is indeed a fantastic opportunity to bring our experience into circulation!*

*Take care - I miss you all!  
Pravu*

Dear Marina,  
dear Sara,

Thanks a lot for your invitation and the exciting concept of your Zimmerhof project. In fact, my as yet short love affair with jewellery began in Zimmerhof in 2007, organised by Helen Britton, where I gave my first lecture on "Schmuck und Exzess" ...!

I suggest the following: Since your dates clash a bit with my rather heavy summer programm, and since the eight artists and I involved in "Answering Pravu" are one team, I would prefer to let my colleague Miro Sazdic present the project with pictures. She could do it in a manner, that there would be ample space for a collective reflection on the relation between words and things, which are so much part of the professional lives of artists.

Miro is, along with Karen Pontoppidan, one of the two jewellers in this group, in which the others are all corpus people. Miro's approach in her work is to explore limits and borders of the possible. One of her earlier works concerned for instance the essential relation between jewellery, prostheses, memory. [In consistence with her approach, she responded to my first question ("What is a question?") with two porcelaine cups and an invitation to a discourse.] Right now she is the acting chief of Adellab in the place of Karen Pontoppidan, where the others are also working, excepting Karen, who is coming to Munich as the successor of Otto Künzli.

I will try to carve out time and come to Zimmerhof as part of the audience. In that case, I would of course be able to participate in the ensuing discussion.

What do you think of the proposal?  
Looking forward to your response!

Take care,  
Pravu



**Tobias Birgersson**

Tobias Birgersson - born 1973 in Sweden - is an Object maker and Metal Artist.

Tobias received his MFA from Konstfack University College of Arts, Craft and Design in 2001. He is a founding member of Gallery LOD, Stockholm, since 1999. Tobias has worked as an educator at his Alma mater from 2008-2015 and is currently working for The University of Gothenburg, HDK-Steneby MetalArt since 2016.

Tobias exhibits internationally, his work is represented in the Swedish National Museums permanent collection and other private collections. He works with public art, Gallery oriented hollowear and sculpture.

web: [www.tobiasbirgersson.se](http://www.tobiasbirgersson.se)  
Instagram: @tbirgersson



**Henrik Brandt**

Henrik Hamanaka Brandt is born 1970 in Stockholm where he is also active. He is a member and founder of the art and craft collective "Svart".

He has a background as corpus/silversmith and is educated at Konstfack. University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, where he received his MFA 2001.

After the Konstfack studies, he has mostly been involved with public art and also has regular gallery exhibitions.

2018 he finished as a metal craft teacher at Konstfack, Ädellab where he worked since 2005 to devote himself full time to his art.

web: [www.citizenbrandt.com](http://www.citizenbrandt.com)



Photo: cbsexton

**David Clarke**

David Clarke is often cited as one of Britain's most highly creative silversmiths. He has a well-earned reputation for producing engaging, intelligent and challenging domestic objects.

The aesthetic most often associated with Clarke's work relates to the subversive nature in which he responds to the entrenched traditions of silversmithing, often taking it to surprising extremes. This absolute willingness to experiment and play inappropriately sets Clarke apart.

Alongside his own studio practice, Clarke also teaches internationally being visiting professor at Konstfack, Sweden; the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Munich and the Royal College of Art, London.

His work is widely sought after internationally and has been acquired by Victoria & Albert Museum, London; The National Museum of Northern Ireland; The National Museum, Oslo; Röhsska Museum, Göteborg Sweden and most recently Dallas Museum of Art, USA. Clarke's work also features in numerous international private collections.

web: [misterclarke.wordpress.com](http://misterclarke.wordpress.com)  
Instagram: mister\_clarke  
Facebook: misterclarke



**Fredrik Ingemansson**

Born 1965 Öland, Sweden.

Fredrik is a classically trained craftsman with a double master craftsman's diploma in Gold and Silversmith craft. He works with all materials and material combinations-questions all Arts&Craft techniques as well as materials and then turn them into innovative creations. Fredrik has worked as an inspired educator for Konstfack University of Arts Craft and Design, Ädellab, 1999-2018. He is currently working from his beautiful Ateljé in Kleva southern Öland, Sweden, where he produces his own Art as well as commissioned work.

Youtube: [silversmeden1](https://www.youtube.com/user/silversmeden1)  
Instagram: @fredrikinge



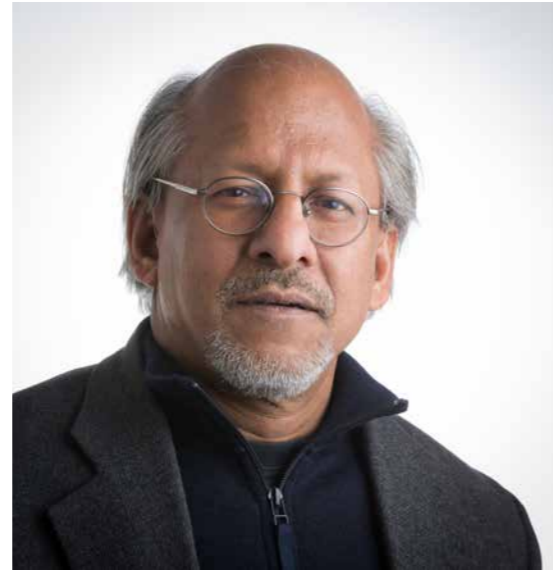
**Magnus Liljedahl**

Magnus Liljedahl-Born in Falkenberg, Sweden. He is a craftsman with passion for hollowear. Magnus ended his studies from Konstfack university College of Arts, Ådellab in 2007. Since 2009 he is a member of the community SVART. Wich is an workshop with eleven members with diffrent knowledge in crafts and arts. Magnus is now working at Konstfack University College of Arts, Ådellab.

His work is represented in the Swedish National Museums collection and other private collections.

A subject that Magnus frequently comes back to in his work is value and how we measure value.

web: [www.magnusliljedahl.com](http://www.magnusliljedahl.com)



**Pravu Mazumdar**

*Pravu Mazumdar* studied physics in New Delhi and Munich and has a doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Stuttgart. He writes in German and English, and his books, which use themes like migration and consumerism to formulate a diagnosis of modernity, are closely connected to the works of thinkers like Michel Foucault and Walter Benjamin. He has written extensively on contemporary jewellery, which he treats as a material articulation of modernity.

Born and brought up in the eastern provinces of India and living between three continents and several languages, Pravu Mazumdar leads a typically contemporary interstitial existence. An essential category of such a mode of living is the idea of *hybridity*, to which Mazumdar has devoted several writings. Selected publications: *Das Niemandsland der Kulturen* (Berlin: 2011); *Gold und Geist: Prolegomena zu einer Philosophie des Schmucks* (Berlin: 2015); "Against Criticism" (Parts I and II) in AJF (Criticality series 6 and 7): <https://artjewelryforum.org/articles-series/against-criticism-seven-variations-on-an-unpleasant-theme-part-1>



**Karen Pontoppidan**

The in Denmark born (1968) artist Karen Pontoppidan lives and works in Munich, Germany. She was educated as a jeweller, studied in the class of jewellery and hollowware by prof. Otto Künzli, at the Fine Art Academy in Munich from 1991 to 1997. Karen Pontoppidan worked from 2006 to 2015 as professor at ÅDELLAB, Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Stockholm.

Since 2015 she is professor of the subject Jewellery Art at the Fine Art Academy in Munich. Karen Pontoppidan is exhibiting in renowned museums and galleries worldwide and she is engaged with jewellery not only as an artist and educator, but also as a recognized author and curator within the field.



**Miro Sazdic**

Miro Sazdic was born in former Yugoslavia and raised in Södertälje, Sweden. She received an MFA from Konstfack University College of Arts, Craft and Design in 1998. Sazdic's artistic practice cuts across jewellery art, craft, reserach, text, collaborative- and participatory projects which involves pro bono work focusing on children and young people. She has exhibited and published in a variety of international venues, curated exhibitions and organized international workshops and symposia. Parallel to her artistic practice she holds a position as senior lecturer and head of the Bachelor programme Ådellab at Konstfack University College of Arts, Craft and Design. At present she also holds a PhD position in Art, Technology and Design at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm.



